

Cuban president: Causes of Ukraine conflict must be found in aggressive U.S. policy and NATO expansion towards Russia's borders

written by Melinda Butterfield

November 28, 2022



Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel and Russian President Vladimir Putin lay flowers at the new monument to Fidel Castro in Moscow, Nov. 22.

Speech delivered by Miguel Mario Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba and President of the Republic, in the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, on Nov. 22, 2022, "Year 64 of the Revolution."

"Cuba strongly condemns the sanctions that are imposed today unilaterally and unfairly on the Russian Federation. The causes of the current conflict in this area must be found in the aggressive policy of the United States and in the expansion of NATO towards Russia's borders, which Cuba has systematically denounced in international forums. Cuba, as it has expressed on many occasions, is in favor of a negotiated solution to the current conflict."

Dear Mr. Volodin, Chairman of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation;

Dear Comrade Melnikov, First Deputy Chairman of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation;

Dear deputies:

Thank you for that warmth that friendly arms always have and for the opportunity that you give me to speak before the plenary of the State Duma. (Applause)

On behalf of the people and the government of the Republic of Cuba, I convey the most cordial and affectionate greetings to all the deputies of this legislature. (Applause)

Parliamentary relations between Russia and Cuba constitute an important pillar of bilateral ties and a key piece for the promotion and development of our economic, commercial, financial and cooperation ties.

In recent years, these relations have deepened remarkably, the exchange between

our delegations has grown, even despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

The president of the State Duma visited us in February of this year and the president of the National Assembly of People's Power, comrade Esteban Lazo Hernández, will visit Moscow shortly.

Our people sincerely appreciate the resolution that this legislative body has approved annually for more than 25 years, demanding an end to the policy of economic, commercial and financial blockade that the government of the United States of America has imposed on Cuba for more than 60 years. We appreciate that gesture and value it very much.

Trump and Biden tighten blockade

Dear deputies:

The economic situation in Cuba is complex at the present time due to a group of fundamentally external factors. In the first place, the intensification of the economic, commercial and financial blockade of the United States in a way that is unprecedented in the history of this cruel and genocidal policy.

Since 2019, the former president of the United States, Donald Trump, applied 243 measures that have affected the main sectors of the economy that pay taxes to the National Economic and Social Development Plan until 2030. The current government of President Biden maintains the vast majority of these in force.

To this is added the economic impact of COVID-19, especially for international tourism, the main source of income for the island, as well as the effects of climate change and the current global crisis.

In these difficult circumstances, Cuba has the support and understanding of its closest friends, including the Russian Federation and, of course, the deputies of this

legislative body who can play a fundamental role in promoting important projects in the economic sphere. (Applause)

Political relations between the Russian Federation and Cuba are excellent, there is broad agreement on the main issues on the international agenda and decisive cooperation in international bodies. However, the full development of our economic, commercial, financial and cooperation ties is still pending to bring them to the same level that political relations have today, and that must be a priority. It is a task for both legislative bodies to work in this direction.



Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel addresses the State Duma of the Russian Federation, Nov. 22. Photo: Granma

Cooperation between Russia and Cuba

I want to highlight, from the feelings of gratitude of the Cuban people, that in the midst of the difficult circumstances of today's world and the complex situation that both the Russian Federation and the Republic of Cuba are experiencing, due to the sustained increase in unfair sanctions on the part of the imperialist powers against our two nations, there is a whole group of exchanges and mutual cooperation projects that were successfully developed at this stage; among them, the successes of a Russian company in terms of geological prospecting and work with oil in the Boca de Jaruco wells, where new technologies have been applied and there is an increase in production and yields.

An investment from a Russian company was also opened in the Mariel Special Development Zone for the diagnosis and repair of the Kamaz technologies that exist in our country.

Work has been underway, with support from the Russian Federation, on the modernization project for an important steel plant in Cuba, La Antillana de Acero, and we expect to conclude the first phase of this project in the coming months, which has to do with the modernization of its steel mill.

On the other hand, the modernization works of the Villa Clara mechanical plant, another important steel development company in our country, have been completed.

We have had the support of humanitarian aid from the Russian Federation in various complex moments for our country, such as the incidents of the Saratoga hotel explosion, the fire at the Supertanker Base in Matanzas Bay, Hurricane Ian, and also in the pandemic peaks we faced during COVID-19.

The facilities that the Russian government has created by granting scholarships for university and postgraduate studies to a group of Cuban professionals are working very effectively, and their potentialities are expanding.

On the other hand, there was an important presence of the Russian business community, which we corroborated with the ambassador in Cuba when we inaugurated, before leaving for this tour, the Russian Federation pavilion at the Havana International Fair.

We have also received support with locomotives for the Cuban railway. We have received a lot of support when we have requested fuel to face the energy situation in our country.

I also want to highlight a particular episode that we had to face in Cuba during COVID-19, and if it had not been for the effort, understanding and support of the Russian Federation we would have had many difficulties. It was precisely when, in the midst of the pandemic peak with the Delta strain, we had a defect in our oxygen production plant.

At that time, our intensive care rooms had a large number of patients who needed oxygen supply, and in the face of this stoppage, our reserves were practically depleted because the levels of oxygen consumption had increased. We made a request for support to the government of the Russian Federation, which immediately responded with a plane loaded with oxygen containers that arrived in Cuba.

This is a gesture that we will never forget, because it is help that is given from understanding, from solidarity, from a deep humanist conviction and at a difficult time. Only true friends do that. (Applause)

U.S., NATO to blame for conflict

Dear deputies:

Cuba strongly condemns the sanctions that are imposed today unilaterally and unfairly on the Russian Federation. The causes of the current conflict in this area must be found in the aggressive policy of the United States and in the expansion of NATO towards Russia's borders, which Cuba has systematically denounced in international forums. Cuba, as it has expressed on many occasions, is in favor of a negotiated solution to the current conflict.

Dear deputies:

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank the heroic Russian people and government for the gesture of dedicating a square in this memorable city of Moscow to place a monument dedicated to the invincible historical leader of the Cuban Revolution, Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz. (Applause) Through my words come also the sincere appreciation of all our people for this symbolic gesture. In this act, a history of solidarity and brotherhood that can never be forgotten is synthesized.

Every time Cuba was faced with challenges and urgency that seemed impossible to face and solve, Russia's generous hand was among the first extended. And thanks to this we overcame the challenges. These are the reasons why we feel the warmth that a dear family offers.

Thank you very much. (Applause)

[Translation: Chicago ALBA Solidarity](#)



In latest election, Nicaraguans decisively reject attempted U.S. subversion

written by Melinda Butterfield

November 28, 2022

The Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) won big in Nicaragua's municipal elections on Nov. 6. The party won every mayoral race nationwide with 73% of voters turning out. The high turnout was in spite of a call by right-wing opposition parties calling for a boycott.

In 1979, the Sandinista guerrillas finally drove out the last dictator of the 42-year-old Somoza dynasty. The reign of the Somozas began with the first of them executing Nicaragua's greatest hero - Augusto Sandino.

During their decades of control, the Somozas amassed incredible riches. It was only their close relationship with and protection offered by the U.S. and the sheer brutality inflicted on peoples' resistance that kept them in power.

But the years of repression, and the invasion and occupation by U.S. Marines in the early 20th century on behalf of U.S. agribusiness - Dole in particular - were etched in the consciousness of 3 million Nicaraguan people and formed the basis of support for the revolutionary Sandinistas.

After Somoza's thugs assassinated a liberal newspaper editor in January 1979, a general strike shut down 80% of all businesses. Protests became more frequent. In the weeks preceding the Sandinista's revolutionary overthrow of Somoza, the streets were already filled with tens of thousands of people thirsting for liberation.

The Somozas' National Guard had killed some 30,000 people over the years and impoverished most of the population. The Sandinistas inherited a country with 500,000 people homeless, and with the exception of Managua and a handful of smaller cities, a largely agricultural and desperately poor population.

Upon victory, President Daniel Ortega and the FSLN enacted important reforms that deepened their support. They nationalized banks and insurance companies, placed import and export of food under government control, and attempted to improve the lives of poor people with a series of programs.

Under Somoza, some 70% of land was farmed by a handful of rich landowners who primarily exported food to the U.S. The Sandinistas distributed unused land to impoverished agricultural workers and formed agricultural cooperatives and state-owned farms to begin the eradication of rural poverty.

The Sandinista government provided medical care to tens of thousands who had never seen a doctor in their lives. They successfully ended polio and other diseases. They launched a literacy program modeled after Cuba's that reduced illiteracy by nearly 40% and earned the UNESCO Literacy Award.

U.S. launches Contra War

Those reforms also earned them the wrath of the White House. The Reagan administration opened up a brutal campaign to recapture Nicaragua and halt the momentum for liberation that was spreading in Central America. Reagan imposed sanctions that prohibited all trade between the U.S. and Nicaragua, and armed and funded the so-called Contra War.

President Jimmy Carter had already authorized CIA funding of the anti-Sandinista opposition, paving the way for Reagan's escalation. Reagan's White House organized Somoza's former National Guard members that had been rousted by the Sandinistas, as well as other right-wing forces from the region, in an illegal and bloody war.

The Contras murdered tens of thousands of Nicaraguans. The Contra War was illegal according to the Boland Amendment, passed by the U.S. Congress in 1984, and Reagan's regime claimed that it was being wound down.

But in 1985, the Sandinistas shot down a plane piloted by Eugene Hasenfus, who was flying arms shipments to the Contras for the CIA. Facing a 30-year prison sentence, Hasenfus opted to sing like a canary to earn leniency. Ortega's government released Hasenfus after revealing the depth of the CIA's continued war against them.

The terrible war and the sanctions, the global setbacks to the socialist camp, and perhaps yet-to-be-revealed election sabotage, led to the election of neoliberal Violetta Chamorro as president in 1990. Even after taking back the presidential palace, the U.S. and its proxies did not attempt to take back all of the progressive measures put in place during the first wave of Sandinista power, out of fear of reigniting the liberation struggle.

In the 2006 elections, the FSLN retook the presidency, and since then, each municipal election has given them a higher vote than the previous one. In spite of all manner of U.S. sabotage, the uplifting of the poor, the spread of medical care, the

provision of housing to the homeless and continued efforts to end illiteracy by the Sandinista government, has built unshakable support.

In 2018, an attempted coup against the FSLN failed. The U.S. State Department narrative claims that this was due to severe repression, and that all electoral opposition figures were jailed, which paved the way for the FSLN victory this month. The reality is that the forces behind the months of violence were well-funded by the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy and were only the latest iteration of the desires of U.S. imperialism to turn back the clock.

Taking funds from an enemy country is a high crime all over the world. Nicaraguans have now expressed their overwhelming rejection of the aims of the 2018 “uprising” and their continued hunger for sovereignty and economic justice.

Solidarity with Nicaragua! Long live the spirit of Augusto Sandino!



Biden, everyone knows Cuba is not

a terrorist country!

written by Melinda Butterfield

November 28, 2022

The Biden administration certainly must have gotten the message after the United Nations General Assembly [condemned the U.S. starvation blockade](#) on Cuba by a vote of 185 to 2 and for the 30th consecutive year. Country after country denounced the U.S. economic war while making special emphasis to remove Cuba from the spurious, arbitrary U.S. State Department State Sponsors of Terrorism (SSOT) list.

Both capitalist parties may thumb their noses in imperial fashion at the world's U.N. votes, but already two U.S. labor organizations are telling the Biden administration to pay attention to voices in the U.S. beyond the minority in South Florida and take Cuba off the SSOT.

At the end of October, the Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific, Southern California Region, [issued a resolution](#) that "strongly urges President Biden and Congress ... to remove Cuba from the United States list of state sponsors of terrorism." Now, just weeks later, the Troy, New York, Labor Council's [Nov. 16 resolution](#) also called for the Biden administration to remove Cuba from the SSOT.

A [draft resolution](#) calling on the Biden administration to use its executive authority to remove Cuba from the State Department's sanction-enhancing list is being circulated among city councils, state legislatures, labor organizations, county commissions, school boards and others. Already [resolutions from elected bodies](#) opposing U.S. policy toward Cuba have been passed that represent more than 40 million U.S. constituents.

Facts should matter. The Obama administration removed Cuba from the unilateral State Department list. Nothing had changed when on Jan. 12, 2021, outgoing

President Donald Trump used his authority to besmirch Cuba by declaring it a SSOT.

And who is the U.S. government to create such a list, considering the havoc it wreaks on the planet? Cuba has been an example of solidarity throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, saving lives at home by developing its own vaccines and across the world with the Henry Reeve Brigade. Even before the SSOT designation, some 243 surgically-honed additional sanctions targeted Cuba's economy in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, intentionally harming the Cuban people.

As Cuba's Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parilla said on Nov. 3 at the United Nations General Assembly debate on Cuba's resolution to end the U.S. blockade:

"The financial persecution has been further reinforced with the arbitrary and fraudulent inclusion of our country in the State Department's unilateral list of alleged countries sponsoring terrorism, which exponentially raises the so-called Country Risk and forces us to pay for any merchandise even at double its price in the international market.

"Such action is inadmissible against a nation that is a victim of terrorism, which even today suffers the instigation of violence and terrorist acts from U.S. territory; and whose conduct of firm rejection and persecution of any form or manifestation of terrorism is unimpeachable and recognized.

"It was a lethal measure imposed by the previous Republican administration, only nine days [before] leaving the White House. The current president could correct it with just a signature. It would be the morally correct and lawful thing to do."

This is why the member groups of the National Network on Cuba are focusing their work in the upcoming year on removing Cuba from the SSOT list - a step toward ending the unjust, cruel one-sided economic war on Cuba. What more can you do?



Democrats show true colors with allegiance to war and enabling of fascism

written by Melinda Butterfield

November 28, 2022

If anyone needs further proof that the Democrats are just as willing as the Republicans to recklessly push the world into crises, the letter from some Democratic congresspersons renouncing a previous, very weak plea delivered by them to President Biden provides plenty of evidence.

On Oct. 25, Rep. Pramila Jayapal, chair of the Progressive Caucus of Congress, issued a [withdrawal of a letter](#) sent the previous day, which had asked President Joe Biden to concentrate more on negotiation rather than escalation of the war in Ukraine.

The letter, in addition to justifying the U.S. proxy war against Russia and Donbass, states that Democrats have “strongly and unanimously supported and voted for

every package of military, strategic and economic assistance to the Ukrainian people ...”

Up until this withdrawal was written, folks could still hold onto the illusion of the “progressive” Democrat. But, in spite of the stances some take on domestic issues, can they still be considered “progressive” if they are helping the Biden administration gamble with a nuclear nightmare and the next world war?

The destruction of World Wars I and II would pale in comparison to the devastation and death now possible with far greater weaponry and delivery systems than the atomic bomb and Boeing B-29 bomber that killed hundreds of thousands of civilians in Hiroshima, Japan, in 1945.

Have these politicians forgotten that horrendous war crime by the U.S. government, which - after seeing the destruction and death it created in Hiroshima, which instantly killed 80,000 civilians, then 140,000 more in a tortuous and painful way - decided to do it again days later in Nagasaki?

Have they forgotten the many genocidal massacres the U.S. and NATO committed after being given free rein with the disbanding of the Warsaw Pact in 1990? Did they forget the 1999 bombing of Yugoslavia, targeting civilians, Chinese journalists, passenger trains and homes? Or Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria, also using the U.S.-led NATO alliance - the most violent, belligerent and aggressive military alliance the world has ever witnessed?

Have they forgotten the blood of millions dripping from the overflowing coffers of military profiteers Boeing, Lockheed Martin, Raytheon and others?

Support for endless war

In a further pledge of allegiance to this imperialist proxy war against Russia, the withdrawal letter states: “Every war ends with diplomacy, and this one will too after

Ukrainian victory.” This statement damns all its signatories.

Not even the most optimistic imperialist observers think the Ukrainian military is capable of defeating Russia within a year or even longer – especially not with the over 6 million people who voted by over 96% to join the Russian Federation in the Donbass republics and in Kherson and Zaporozhye.

What the statement really means is that these so-called progressive Democrats are okay with extending this war with greater and greater weapons of mass destruction sent by the U.S., targeting those millions of people and the Russian soldiers protecting them, and indefinitely continuing a conflict that could spill into World War III.

The fact that these congresspeople immediately rescinded their original letter, which was in no way critical of this U.S. proxy war and even helped to justify the escalations, shows the extreme cowardice of these politicians, who are much more aware than most people about U.S. war and its aims.

Ukraine: a U.S. puppet state

But there's more. That original letter sent on Oct. 24 states: “Your support for the self-defense of an independent, sovereign and democratic state has been supported by Congress, including through various appropriations of military, economic and humanitarian aid in furtherance of this cause.”

The fact is that Ukraine is no longer a sovereign state. That disappeared when the U.S.-orchestrated, -funded and -trained neo-Nazi organizations overthrew the democratically elected government of Ukraine in 2014 and replaced it with an anti-Russian, pro-NATO administration dominated by Washington.

In fact, leaked conversations after the coup by U.S. diplomat Victoria Nuland — now Biden's Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs — exposed her discussions with

other U.S. officials deciding who would be part of the new Ukrainian government.

After 2014, any real opposition to the coup government and growing neo-Nazi influence, especially the military and security forces of Ukraine, was eliminated, sometimes by fire – as in the burning alive of anti-fascists and workers in May 2014 at the House of Trade Unions in Odessa by neo-Nazi gangs.

Currently socialist and communist parties are banned in Ukraine, as are capitalist parties critical of the war. So is the use of the Russian language, which is spoken by a majority of people in the Donbass region and much of eastern Ukraine.

Any elections or activities of the Ukrainian state after February 2014 existed without any real democratic freedom. Guarantees were imposed to insure that any subsequent administrations would be anti-Russian and loyal to Western and U.S. imperialism.

Eight-year massacre of Donbass

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky continued the massacre of the people of the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics in the Donbass region. Between the spring of 2014 and Russia's intervention last February, over 14,000 people died because of Ukraine's war on Donbass. The casualties continue to grow by the day, especially in the capital of Donetsk and surrounding areas.

Zelensky is now calling for a nuclear first strike against Russia, the country that, for the first time in eight years, was able to stop the genocide occurring in much of the Donbass region. The fact is that by Feb. 23 the Ukrainian military had at least 150,000 troops amassed at the border of the Donbass republics and had escalated the bombing of the region 20-fold in just the five days prior to Russia's intervention.

A massacre of Donbass residents – whom the Ukrainian regime openly calls “subhuman” – was about to occur; a fact the Washington “progressives” refuse to

admit, since they don't even recognize the existence of the people of the Donbass region.

This is why they also aren't willing to acknowledge the formal and legitimate request for assistance by the LPR and DPR for Russia's military support on Feb. 23 to protect millions of people targeted for death by Kiev. The only thing that stopped an ensuing massacre was the Russian intervention, condemned so vehemently by the "progressive" congresspeople in their letters to Biden.

Why the 180-degree turn?

The original letter of the "progressives" also includes this passage, which quotes Biden: "It is imperative to avoid direct military conflict with Russia, which would lead to 'World War III, something we must strive to prevent.'

"The risk of nuclear weapons being used has been estimated to be higher now than at any time since the height of the Cold War. Given the catastrophic possibilities of nuclear escalation and miscalculation, which only increase the longer this war continues, we agree with your goal of avoiding direct military conflict as an overriding national-security priority."

The withdrawal letter actually does a 180-degree turn and advocates escalation towards World War III and extension of the war.

Did something change from one day to the next, negating that threat of nuclear disaster? No, it did not.

What did change is that the orders came down from the capitalist ruling class - the bankers, bosses and Big Oil barons - that the Democratic National Committee had to get their "progressive" wing in line before the midterm elections. No perceived opposition to the war, even this timid, could be allowed to stand.

And so they did get in line. The “progressives” proved themselves to be just as cowardly as the “moderate” Republicans who bowed to Trump and the ultra-right.

Since then, one thing has changed, but it aggravates rather than negates the threat of nuclear conflict. The Pentagon announced in November that U.S. boots on the ground were no longer limited to Kiev, creating further opportunities for “miscalculation” when U.S. troops get killed while they assist in targeting Russian soldiers.

If the U.S. remains on this most dangerous trajectory, it will destroy all of the good work some of these “progressive” politicians have done in the past, if only by giving lip service to genuinely progressive movements and causes.

These politicians are now enabling endless U.S. wars; increasing the possibility of World War III; and aiding the continuing rise of fascism and white supremacy supported by the U.S. in Ukraine and blowing back in places like Buffalo, New York, where a white supremacist inspired by the fascist Azov Battalion killed 10 Black people in a supermarket on May 14.

These politicians know better. Shame on them all!

The congressmembers who signed the two letters are: Pramila Jayapal, Earl Blumenauer, Cori Bush, Jesús “Chuy” García, Raúl M. Grijalva, Sara Jacobs, Ro Khanna, Barbara Lee, Ilhan Omar, Ayanna Pressley, Sheila Jackson Lee, Mark Pocan, Nydia M. Velázquez, Gwen S. Moore, Yvette D. Clarke, Henry C. “Hank” Johnson Jr., Rashida Tlaib, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Mondaire Jones, Peter A. DeFazio, Jamaal Bowman, Marie Newman, Alma S. Adams, Chellie Pingree, Jamie Raskin, Bonnie Watson Coleman, Mark Takano, André Carson, Donald M. Payne Jr. and Mark DeSaulnier.



La lucha del pueblo vs. gobierno en Puerto Rico

written by Melinda Butterfield

November 28, 2022

La crisis causada por la privatización de la energía en Puerto Rico, expone cuáles son los alineamientos en la lucha de clases aquí. Por un lado está el pueblo y sus organizaciones de base, incluyendo a importantes profesionales e intelectuales, además de los medios alternativos que responden a los intereses del pueblo, y por el otro lado el poderoso bloque compuesto por la administración del gobierno insular, incluyendo a la legislatura liderada por los partidos colonialistas PNP y PPD; el gobierno estadounidense y su Congreso que representan, no a la susodicha democracia y justicia, sino a los intereses corporativos energéticos yanquis, principalmente del gas.

El pueblo ya ha repudiado enérgicamente a la privatizadora estadounidense-canadiense Luma Energy que está destruyendo la infraestructura compleja de electricidad por su falta de mantenimiento de la Distribución y Transmisión que tiene a su cargo. Los constantes apagones y las alzas desmedidas en las tarifas,

unidos a la falta de transparencia de su operación que ha incluido hasta desacatos al tribunal de PR por parte de su dirigencia, hacen que este contrato pueda ser anulado por falta de cumplimiento el próximo 30 de noviembre cuando termina la vigencia del contrato actual que es uno suplementario en lo que la Autoridad de Energía termina su proceso de quiebra.

Sin embargo, la administración del gobernador Pierluisi, actuando como un verdadero dictador, insiste en la continuidad de este contrato leonino por 15 años más. A este bloque dictatorial se une el Secretario de Justicia de PR, la Junta de Control Fiscal impuesta por EUA, y recientemente, hasta la Secretaría de Energía de los EUA que visitó PR recientemente.

Pero en lo que queda de este mes, el pueblo seguirá manifestándose en las calles para exigir la cancelación del contrato bajo la consigna de ¡Fuera Luma, Fuera Pierluisi, Fuera JCF!

Desde Puerto Rico para Radio Clarín en Colombia, les habló Berta Joubert-Ceci.



James Baldwin, corporate media and the red herring of ‘Black antisemitism’

written by Melinda Butterfield

November 28, 2022

In 1967, the great African American writer James Baldwin wrote an article that explored the relationship between the Jewish and Black communities, and in particular, the justified anger the Black community felt towards Jewish landlords and businesspeople in major U.S. cities.

For decades, dating back to the great migration of southern Black people to northern and midwestern U.S. cities, Jewish business owners and landlords engaged in practices of exploitation and racism to prove their value to the white ruling class.

Jewish landlords charged Black families exorbitant rents. Jewish capitalists often denied service to Black individuals at their small businesses.

Baldwin details this reality in "[Negroes Are Anti-Semitic Because They're Anti-White](#)," a title that doesn't quite mean what it might first appear to mean. The article is ultimately a call for a legitimate reconciliation between the Jewish and Black communities, and for both communities to turn their attention to the real enemy.

Baldwin wrote: "Our parents were lashed to futureless jobs, in order to pay the outrageous rent. We knew that the landlord treated us this way only because we were colored and he knew that we could not move out.

"The grocer was a Jew, and being in debt to him was very much like being in debt to

the company store. The butcher was a Jew, and we certainly paid more for meat than [white] New York citizens, and very often carried insults home, along with the meat."

Baldwin went on to describe how in isolated mid-20th century Black New York neighborhoods, the Jewish small business owners and landowners executed the racist will of the larger and more powerful white ruling class. To many Black families, it felt like Jewish business owners ran every aspect of their life.

Unfortunately, this resentment, stoked by ruling class "model minority" politics, has grown into pockets of antisemitism and the growth of "Black Hebrew Israelite" ideology. This homophobic, transphobic and capitalist ideology posits that the contemporary Jewish community are evil fraudsters who stole the identity of Judaism and to this day manipulate the global economy.

It is an ideology that ignores history and does nothing but divide two communities that should be united in solidarity against capitalism and racism - two communities that at times have been in solidarity against racism.

Black celebrities

Even more unfortunately, this ideology has taken hold among a few Black celebrity icons.

In recent weeks, [Kanye West](#) and [Kyrie Irving](#) have drawn significant backlash for antisemitic comments. In West's case, he openly asserted that Jews run the planet and donned a "[white lives matter](#)" t-shirt along with fascist talk show host Candace Owens.

If that wasn't bad enough, West also openly attacked and maligned members of [George Floyd's family](#).

West is known for his open admiration for Hitler and his belief that Jews control all global events from the shadows. Irving's comments were a little more complicated, but still ultimately misguided.

Irving received a great deal of criticism and media attention after he tweeted support for the film, "Hebrews to Negroes." Among other things, this film argues that the Holocaust was a fabrication and that modern Jewry are born from a satanic cult that stole the Jewish identity from Black Africans.

To be abundantly clear, this ideology is harmful, inaccurate, and ultimately capitalist. The goal of the Black Hebrew Israelite ideology is not the liberation of all people from capitalist oppression, but to simply replace the perceived Jewish global cabal as the head of the exploitative global imperialist system.

It must be acknowledged that this ideology grew from a legitimate resentment felt in the Black community against Jewish landlords in New York City and Chicago neighborhoods that sought to control and oppress their Black tenants and neighbors.

It flows logically that this resentment could grow into a conspiracy-based ideology, based on experiences with racist Jews trying to prove their worth to wealthy white non-Jews, in the absence of a revolutionary, multinational working-class movement.

Inequality, then and now

It's not as if the racist inequality apparent between the Jewish and Black communities has changed since Baldwin recorded his perspective more than 50 years ago. Jews in the U.S. are able to achieve higher-paying jobs, management positions and political office at a far higher rate than individuals in the Black community due to the Jewish community's relative privilege.

The ruling class has for centuries elevated certain oppressed groups to divide the

working class and police the most oppressed. In the United States, the Jewish community has long provided managers, small business owners and academics to the ranks of the capitalist system.

The core contradiction of the U.S. Jewish community is the ability of Jewish individuals to become wealthy and obtain positions of power, while buying into the false belief that they will eventually be fully accepted into mainstream white society.

The vast majority of Black people in the U.S struggle through economic warfare, crumbling schools and racist police terror to simply survive, and have little or no opportunity to rise to positions of wealth and power.

This isn't to say that Irving's views on the Jewish community are to be condoned or accepted, let alone West's antisemitism, sexist harrasment of his ex-wife, or - to be frank - his support for white supremacy. It is just to say that the ideology expressed by them exists for a reason. This noxious ideology grew from legitimate grievances with racist Jewish business owners and landlords.

Media's red herring

In reality, West's and Irving's respective remarks aren't even the most concerning development in the fraught dynamic between the Black and Jewish communities. More alarming is the corporate media's attempt to increase the wedge driven between the two communities.

The U.S. corporate media will never tell us the truth about our true class enemy, the billionaires and their political henchmen, most of whom are racist white men. Instead, outlets like [CNN](#), [NPR](#), and [Newsweek](#) will do everything in their power to obfuscate legitimate social issues and instead pit oppressed communities against one another.

When Black celebrities espouse backwards or antisemitic beliefs, corporate media

seizes on the opportunity to stoke conflict between the Black and Jewish communities.

Ruling class media accomplishes this division by pushing a false narrative that the Black community is somehow inherently more antisemitic than others. Since West and Irving made their antisemitic remarks, mainstream news outlets have erupted in a [firestorm](#) of coverage [harping on](#) antisemitism among [Black celebrities](#) and communities.

This tactic is concerning and problematic for many reasons. It is concerning that backwards comments from Black celebrities gets more attention and calls for accountability than Nazi-founded companies such as [Adidas](#) and [Chanel](#). It's concerning that Black celebrities lose their wealth and reputation for hateful comments, while white athlete Brett Favre is allowed to extort welfare funds from the state of Mississippi without any accountability.

It's concerning that a "Saturday Night Live" audience reacted in horror when guest host Dave Chapelle asserted that the oppression of Jews cannot be placed on the shoulders of Black Americans. That would seem obvious; however, it seems the corporate media has convinced many Democratic Party-aligned whites that Black people are indeed the central oppressor of the Jewish community.

(A better question to ask is why Chapelle, a notorious transphobe, was invited to host the "liberal" SNL during the current anti-trans panic.)

This phenomena is not only based in falsehood, but is also incredibly dangerous. The Jewish community must identify the oppressor, it's true; but the oppressor is not the Black community.



Unity against the common oppressor

On the contrary, the oppressor of the Jewish community is the same as that of the Black community. The oppressor is the billionaire. The oppressor is the war profiteer. The oppressor is the imperialist. The oppressor is the white supremacist. The oppressor is the Nazi. They are the ones with institutional power to carry out antisemitic oppression.

The Jewish community must reject the false narrative that the Black community, which has no such power under white supremacist capitalism, is somehow the main purveyor of antisemitism, or even somehow more proportionally antisemitic than other communities.

One must simply look at the acts of violence in recent years against the Jewish community and those at the head of the modern fascist movement to see who are the

central purveyors of antisemitism: the white ruling class and their neo-Nazi running dogs.

Robert Bowers, who shot and killed 11 Jews at the Tree of Life Synagogue, is a white neo-Nazi. When hundreds of right wingers marched on Charlottesville, Virginia, chanting “Jews will not replace us,” they were hundreds of white neo-Nazis. The men who sparked a new wave of racist and antisemitic mass movements – Donald Trump, Steve Bannon, Rupert Murdoch, Alex Jones, Tucker Carlson, the list goes on – are racists, fascists and billionaires.

The ruling class is the enemy, not individual Black celebrities, nor some imagined global Jewish banking cabal.

James Baldwin asserted that a legitimate and candid engagement on past and current injustices between the Black and Jewish communities would be of “inestimable value.” This reconciliation can only occur when Jewish communities reject racism and take responsibility for the struggle going forward against the common enemy, the capitalist system.

The ongoing corporate media propaganda only serves to shift blame for antisemitism and racist hatred onto oppressed communities, when those communities should instead be joining in solidarity in the fight to build workers’ power, end racist police terror and liberate all people from U.S. imperialism.

Lev Koufax is an anti-Zionist Jewish activist based in Baltimore.



Follow the money: Exposing the capitalists behind attacks on abortion rights

written by Melinda Butterfield

November 28, 2022

On Nov. 13, the Louisiana Abortion Rights Action Committee (LARAC) made a significant contribution to the movement with their webinar, “Follow the Money: End the Capitalist War on Women.” Since the ultra-right-wing Supreme Court’s overturning of Roe v. Wade, LARAC has led resistance in the streets of New Orleans. Louisiana has one of the strictest abortion bans in the country.

The webinar addressed how the right-wing movement attacking the reproductive rights of women and other child-bearing people is funded by and serves the interests of the filthy-rich capitalists. This is a fact often left out of the abortion discussion in the mainstream media, where the “debate” is framed in terms of differences in religious views and paints an image of a right-wing movement coming out of nowhere.

Those leading the militant fightback in Louisiana and elsewhere know better.

Exposing Louisiana monarchy

LARAC activists began their exposé at the state level. As Edith Romero of LARAC put it, “It’s important to know who are the people in power.” Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry, who is expected to run for governor, has played a major role in attacking abortion rights.

Romero, an immigrant healthcare worker, explained: “Jeff Landry is a very vocal anti-abortion, anti-vaxx, sexist, transphobic, homophobic person ... He sued to get rid of Medicaid, depriving 700,000 people of much needed medical services ... He sued several times against mask mandates and basic safety policies in Louisiana ... He sued to cancel DACA ...

“Multiple of his companies hire immigrant workers to pay them less than U.S.-born workers ... He is anti-immigrant but needs them for his own benefit. He fought diligently to criminalize abortion and have it as a crime that can be prosecuted.”

Romero laid out the forces funding Landry’s right-wing politics. His campaign contributors in 2021 include Inwood Petroleum (contributed \$80,000); oil and gas company Harvey Gulf International Marine (\$50,000); and more. The presentation explained that Landry himself, unsurprisingly, has big stakes in oil and gas companies.

The same capitalists who are profiting by destroying our planet are reaping the benefits of dividing the working class with vicious attacks on women, LGBTQ2S people and people of color.

Military-industrial complex is anti-women

LARAC organizer Elena Voisin, a student at Loyola University, explained the role of

the military-industrial complex in the anti-women assaults.

“Just this year, close to \$2 trillion was given to the Department of Defense and the Department of Energy ... They contract hundreds of billions of dollars to businesses [like Lockheed Martin]. All of this is to create exorbitant profits for them and their government conspirators ...

“Every year these corporations spend hundreds of millions to influence politicians ... all to get them to increase the defense budget. And the next year they are given even larger contracts, so the bribes pay off ... Not to mention politicians’ personal investments in these corporations ...

“How does the government finance this? Taxes and banks. Banks are profiting off wars. The government never has enough reserve funds to finance their wars, so they have to resort to loans ... Under the guise of reducing the national debt, they cut social programs ... They will cut anything except military spending.”

Webinar host Sally Jane Black—a queer, trans woman worker—added that “the same right-wing organizations pushing this anti-abortion agenda are the ones pushing the military-industrial complex.”

Indeed, the U.S. imperialists’ military spending is an all-out assault on the working class in this country as well as on those harmed and killed in target countries.

Voisin explained the mechanisms of “control and suppression” at play here. “Especially without social programs to help, the medical and childcare expenses alone can trap whole families in poverty. There is already little social mobility, but now it’s out of the question ...

“Abortion restrictions are just one part of the super-exploitation of the working class. This exploitation is necessary for the military-industrial complex ... The sooner we come together as workers against our common enemies, the sooner we can all be

liberated.”

Roe v. Wade won in the streets

LARAC organizer and hospitality worker Heidi Jordan debunked the view that progressive movements can be successful by playing by the oppressors’ rules. Jordan stated: “Representatives of the oppressor always say, ‘just wait, it’ll change, we’ll change,’ but history has demonstrated over and over again that that’s not true. They placate. They use bribery, flattery, grants, deception and positions.” Jordan explained that when these “soft” tactics fail, the capitalist state does not hesitate to use brutal repression.

Progressive change does not come down from benevolent rulers. Rather, it is the power of the organized people that forces the rulers to make concessions. Roe v. Wade was won in just such a way, Jordan explained.

“The struggle for the right to a safe, legal abortion in the 1970s was part of a broader movement for women’s liberation. Roe v. Wade was won in the street, not in the homes of rich women or in the halls of Congress.”

In a sharp rebuke to those who want us to isolate our struggles and to undermine solidarity among all working-class and oppressed people, Jordan cited the historical record, showing how the women’s movement of the 1970s fought on all fronts—for LGBTQ2S rights, against racism, in support of the Black Panther Party, and to end the U.S. imperialists’ war of aggression against Vietnam.

She explained, furthermore, that this was a global movement. To be effective, today’s struggle must be as broad as its predecessor.

Bringing it all together

Gavrielle Gemma, with LARAC and the NOLA-based Workers Voice Socialist

Movement, summed up many aspects of the appeal that LARAC is making.

"We call it abortion access because even when we had the legal right, we had to defend it with our bodies against attacks," Gemma said. "We felt that it was very important to expose who are the forces behind and funding these right-wing assaults ... The hidden economic hand is left untouched [in the discussions that focus just on elections]. [And there was] \$17 billion spent on these recent elections ...

"The right-wing didn't completely create a tsunami against the Democrats ... But what we have had is the predominance in the economy of the military, as well as oil and gas, and insurance and banking—these are controlling elements of the capitalist economy, and they are controlling the political situation. These are far-right-wing forces ...

"We are the ones that are being targeted by the super-rich ... [There has been an] unbelievable accumulation of wealth in fewer and fewer hands. This has gone on through all administrations."

Gemma made a moving appeal to take the movement to the next level, not relying on official channels—not even those of the supposedly progressive Democratic Party.

"We should be up there [in Baton Rouge] linking arms at the Louisiana State Capitol when they are back in session in the spring ... They are terrified of our unity."



Activists denounce FBI attacks on Black liberation group

written by Melinda Butterfield

November 28, 2022

Washington, D.C. — The Black is Back Coalition led a protest march through the streets of the capital Nov. 5 to denounce the FBI attacks on the leadership of the African People's Socialist Party (APSP) in Florida and Missouri.

The action began at Malcolm X Park, where APSP Chairman Omali Yeshitela addressed the crowd. Yeshitela and his wife Ona Zené Yeshitela were targeted by an FBI raid of their home in St. Louis on July 29 for their opposition to the U.S. proxy war in Ukraine.

Activists then marched through the streets of D.C. to the White House. Marching down 14th Street, they greeted shoppers and sidewalk diners with several chants, including: "Fist up, fight back, stop the FBI attack" and "Two, four, six, eight, tell the people who we hate - FBI, CIA, the whole damn state!"

Upon reaching the White House, the crowd listened to other speakers, including Pam Africa, who offered solidarity from political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. Brother Lee Patterson also read a solidarity statement from the Socialist Unity Party defending the APSP against the FBI attacks - part of the continuing war on Black Liberation organizations since the 1960s.

SLL photos: Bayani and Andre Powell



Shooting at Club Q reflects rising fascist terror

written by Melinda Butterfield

November 28, 2022

We must unite against the right in a mass workers' movement

Nov. 20: Last night's attack on Club Q in Colorado Springs is a result of years of anti-LGBTQ fearmongering in federal election campaigns, state legislatures, local municipalities and school boards, and across the capitalist media.

Even though most people support LGBTQ people and our rights, the rich have spent millions funding politicians who spread hate. These anti-LGBTQ campaigns are part of a program to divide, disenfranchise and attack the working class. United we can defend LGBTQ rights and fight back on every issue affecting the working class, from immigrant rights to abortion access to ending U.S. wars for profit.

Anti-LGBTQ violence funded by billionaires and hate groups

Billionaire-funded hate groups posing as foundations and think tanks—including the Alliance Defending Freedom, the American Legislative Exchange Council, and others—have drafted hundreds of anti-LGBTQ bills and policy proposals for state legislatures and school boards. These same foundations push attacks on abortion rights and anti-racist education and have blocked raises to the minimum wage.

They push laws that target healthcare, sports, and bathroom access for trans people, especially trans youth; policies forbidding discussion of LGBTQ-related subjects and people in schools; and attempts by the state to take trans children away from their parents. As healthcare for trans people has come under heavier attack, suicide rates for trans people—especially trans youth—have risen.

That the Club Q shooting occurred the night before Trans Day of Remembrance and Resilience is hardly a coincidence. The past few years have seen a rise in anti-trans violence and record murder rates, especially for Black trans women. The more the capitalists push anti-LGBTQ policies through the government, the more the far-right is emboldened to carry out terrorist attacks.

Capitalist media has helped stoke the flames

The media has been complicit in anti-LGBTQ campaigns, promoting the division and lies the politicians have been spreading. From Fox News to the New York Times, the media has spent years amplifying those who equate being queer or trans with being

a sexual predator, including politicians and celebrities like billionaire JK Rowling.

More police are not the answer

After many mass shootings, politicians and their wealthy backers take the opportunity to call for more funding for the police. But customers took down the shooter at Club Q, not the police. And when police have been on the scene, they have protected far-right, anti-LGBTQ hate groups.

Recently in New York, police escorted a rally of far-right, anti-trans demagogues, which was met by counter-protestors defending LGBTQ people. This week, police in Denton, Texas, provided protection to Proud Boys and Christian nationalists who targeted an event where trans people were reading to children.

Police do not prevent mass shootings, and they don't exist to protect us. They serve the rich and powerful. Heavily armed by the same weapons dealers making fortunes off war, many police forces include members of the same hate groups targeting LGBTQ people and other oppressed people. During the 2016 Pulse nightclub shooting, police waited outside for hours, refusing to help those trapped inside. In Uvalde, Texas, police stood idly by while children were murdered.

In the last few years, local, state, and federal politicians have gone out of their way to increase funding to the police. Last year Biden urged city and state governments to spend \$350 billion worth of COVID relief money on cops and jails. At the same time, the cost of living has skyrocketed, unemployment has worsened, and no relief has come from the government.

The rich fear a scenario where these conditions lead to outright rebellion, as they did in 2020 in the wake of the police murder of George Floyd. The funding of fascist forces and the attacks on LGBTQ people, immigrants and activists are meant to divide and weaken us. They don't want us to challenge—much less overturn—the

system of exploitation and oppression that is the basis of all their hoarded wealth.

Voting and the courts are not the answer

While Republicans openly run on platforms of hate, the Democrats offer empty promises. They have already given up on a federal bill to protect abortion rights after the midterms. And they have largely stood by as voting rights of millions—especially Black people—have been stripped away by the right wing.

The Democratic Party blames voters for their losses and inaction rather than admitting that they have failed to address fundamental issues affecting all workers. They have failed not because they did not have support from voters or because of some broken Congressional procedure. They failed because they do not serve the people; they serve the rich.

Even if politicians could help us, we cannot afford to wait for the next election. Women and others who can bear children cannot access abortions right now. Immigrants are under assault, especially in Texas, where Governor Abbott has invoked invasion clauses to call in the National Guard. And no protection will come from the unelected, undemocratic Supreme Court, a panel of nine millionaires who stripped many rights last session and have openly proclaimed their intention to re-criminalize homosexuality, interracial marriage and birth control in future rulings.

We need a movement - NOW

The only answer to this violence is a united front against rising fascist terror. We can build a mass, militant movement to make it clear we will not be divided and intimidated by their violence.

To do this, we must go to our fellow workers directly and dispel the lies spread about LGBTQ people, stand in solidarity with immigrants, and speak out against the warmongers and parasites who profit off our suffering.

[Source: Workers Voice](#)



New York trans community defies police repression, shuts down hate rally

written by Melinda Butterfield

November 28, 2022

More than a hundred trans people and supporters came out to New York City Hall on Nov. 14 to protest a hate rally featuring British TERF Kellie-Jay Keen. It was the final stop on her 11-city U.S. speaking tour. At every stop, fighters for trans liberation and equality mobilized to counter Keen and her home-grown far-right allies.

Only about 20 TERF supporters turned out here, many traveling from other cities, like Jenna Hoch of Denver, who attacked a 14-year-old counter-protester with bear mace at an earlier Keen event in Tacoma, Washington. Their numbers also included

several paid security guards.

TERF stands for “Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminist.” This is a deliberately misleading description, as TERFs are neither radical nor feminist. Rather, they adopt the trappings of women’s rights protests to attack transgender, nonbinary and other gender-nonconforming people and advocate for their elimination.

Keen’s real agenda is shown by her cozy relationship with the white supremacist Proud Boys and by the massive outpouring of New York Police Department protection for her supporters.

The TERFs’ hate speech infuriated those who came out to oppose them. Their venom is especially directed at trans women while claiming they want to “save” trans men from being themselves. These statements are deeply painful and dehumanizing for all trans and nonbinary people living under a hostile capitalist system.

But this rhetoric also fuels the anti-trans panic currently being used to incite right-wing violence against queer people and ram through measures like Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis’s recent order to detransition all trans youth in the state - despite plentiful evidence that this will lead to more suicides and abuse.

WarmUp NY called New York’s counter-protest. Participating groups included New York Antifa, the Young Communist League, Women in Struggle/Mujeres En Lucha, and Socialist Unity Party.

Trans New Yorkers were determined to drown out and disrupt the TERFs’ hate speech. Opposing them was a small army of New York City cops. At least a hundred NYPD officers formed a wall protecting the fascists from the righteous anger of the LGBTQ2S community. They declared the counter-protest an “unlawful assembly” and arrested nine people.

This reporter witnessed four of these targeted arrests. Police picked out individuals

in the crowd, surrounded them, dragged them to the ground, and cuffed them.

Trans people and allies held their ground against the violent police. They kept up loud chants of “TERFS go home,” “Protect trans kids,” “Trans women are women, trans men are men,” and “How do you spell racist? NYPD.” They held banners, signs and flags.

Keen stayed away after cops advised her that they were unable to suppress the counter-protest. Instead, she posted a whiny YouTube video from a nearby Starbucks. The bigots ended the failed hate rally, and their opponents declared victory.

Afterward, many people went to One Police Plaza to conduct jail solidarity for the arrested comrades. They took shifts in the bitter cold until everyone was released.

TERFs and Nazis say get back; trans people say fight back!

SLL photos: Melinda Butterfield

